

Revelation 12 – The Cosmic Battle

No one acquainted with the Gospels can read today's story of a woman, male child and dragon in Revelation 12 without thinking of Mary, the Christ child and their divine deliverance from the evil schemes of Herod the Great. What John gives us here is the Jesus story told in a different literary genre to help us see more reality than we usually take in with our physical senses (earthly & heavenly realities). This isn't science fiction but reality from the divine perspective.

Warm Up Question(s) – Choose one

- Share a story of a memorable team victory (or defeat) and who or what turned the tide.
- When you were a child, who was the most important woman in your life besides your mother? Why?

Discovering the Word

- 1) **Read Revelation 12.** Who are the cast of characters in this heavenly drama? How is each described? Who does each represent (*cf.* Micah 4¹⁰; Psalm 2⁷⁻⁹; Gen. 3¹⁻⁷)?¹
- 2) Where does the action take place? What is the outcome of the conflict?
- 3) Which Old Testament and New Testament stories are parallels or echoes of this passage?
- 4) Commentator Darrell Johnson says this chapter “is at once a flash-back and flash-forward.” When do you see this battle taking place: past? Present? Future?
- 5) In John's mind, heaven and earth are intricately related. What happens in heaven and what are the effects or implication on earth (and vice-versa—i.e. what happens on earth...implication in heaven)?
- 6) How does knowing that we live in a spiritual “war zone” affect how you see and respond to what happens in the world?
- 7) What good news and bad news do you see in the announcement (vv. 10-12)?
- 8) What evidence do you see of the dragon's powers? What evidence do you see of a higher power?
- 9) When & how have you seen or experienced God's protective and/or saving power?

¹ The characters in this story are composites as John makes *explicit* in his composite description and identification of the “great dragon” in verse 9 (i.e. “that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan”). The other characters are *implicitly* composite. See “The Baby and the Dragon” at <http://mbherald.com/baby-dragon/>